

Claims

- 1 An isolated protein comprising
- 5 i) a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of Seq ID No.1; or
- ii) a variant of the polypeptide of (i).
- 2 A protein according to claim 1 wherein the polypeptide (i) has the
- 10 amino acid sequence of Seq ID No.2.
- 3 A protein according to claim 1 or 2 which comprises a polypeptide
- which is at least 65% homologous to the amino acid sequence of Seq ID No.1.
- 15 4 A trimer comprising a protein as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3.
- 5 A trimer according to claim 4 which is a homotrimer.
- 6 An isolated polynucleotide which encodes a protein as claimed in claim
- 20 1, 2 or 3, or a strand which is complementary to said polynucleotide.
- 7 An isolated polynucleotide according to claim 6 which comprises
- i) a polynucleotide portion having the sequence as shown in Seq ID
- 25 No.3; or
- (ii) a variant of said portion or a complementary strand thereto.
- 8 An isolated polynucleotide according to claim 6 or 7 wherein the
- 30 polynucleotide portion has the sequence as shown in Seq ID No.4.
- 9 A vector comprising a polynucleotide as claimed in claim 6, 7 or 8.
- 10 A host cell comprising a vector as claimed in claim 9.
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10           An antibody specific for a protein as claimed in any one of claims 1, 2  
or 4 or a trimer as claimed in claim 4 or 5.

5           11           A method for the identification of a compound which modulates the  
interaction between the protein as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, or a trimer as  
claimed in claim 4 or 5, and its receptor, comprising contacting said protein and  
receptor in the presence of a test compound and monitoring for modulation of  
the interaction.

10           12           A compound identifiable by the method according to claim 11 for use in  
therapy.

15           13           Use of a compound identifiable by the method of claim 11 for the  
manufacture of a medicament for use in immunotherapy.

20           14           A method of treatment of a disorder which is responsive to modulation  
of the interaction between the protein of claim 1, 2 or 3 or the trimer of claim 4 or  
5, and its receptor which comprises administering to a patient an effective  
amount of a compound identifiable by a method according to claim 11.

25           15           The method according to claim 14 wherein the disorder is a disorder of  
the immune system, or cancer.

30           16           A protein according to claim 1, 2 or 3 or a trimer according to claim 4 or  
5 for use in therapy.

35           17           Use of a protein according to claim 1, 2 or 3 or a trimer according to  
claim 4 or 5 for the manufacture of a medicament for use in immunotherapy or  
treatment of cancer.

          18           A method of treatment of a disorder which is responsive to modulation  
of the interaction between the protein of claim 1, 2 or 3 or the trimer of claim 4 or  
5, and its receptor which comprises administering to a patient an effective  
amount of a protein according to any of claim 1, 2 or 3 or a trimer according to  
claim 4 or 5.

19        A method of producing a protein as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 which  
method comprises introducing into an appropriate cell line a vector comprising a  
polynucleotide as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 8 under conditions suitable  
5        for obtaining expression of the protein.

20        The method of claim 19 which further comprises allowing the protein  
produced to form into trimers.

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